



Strategic Plan

2023 – 2026

RECYCLING VICTORIA



We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



© The State of Victoria Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action 2023

Creative Commons

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence, visit the Creative Commons website (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, and the Victorian Government and Department logos.

ISSN 2981-8702 (pdf)

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service (www.relayservice.com.au) on 133 677. Available at the Recycling Victoria website (www.recycling.vic.gov.au).

Contents

About us	3
About our Strategic Plan	4
Our functions	6
Our purpose	7
Our vision and focus areas	8
Our strategic objectives 2023 – 2026	9
Strategic priorities 2023 – 2026	10
Approach	11
Drivers for success	12
Building our capabilities and systems	13
Charter of Engagement and Community Engagement Strategy	14
Regulatory Strategy	14
Risk management	14
Annual corporate planning and reporting	14



**Through our work
we focus on building
a world class circular
economy system.**

About us

As the recycling industry continues to transform — including by responding to changes in international markets — it is essential that Victoria’s waste and resource recovery sector can deliver services for our current and future needs and maximise the benefits of resource recovery for households and the business community.

Recycling Victoria was established to provide leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling or resource recovery services, and support the development of a circular economy.

Transitioning to a stronger circular economy will encourage innovation, give rise to more sustainability focussed jobs, provide quality goods and services to end users, and enable more consistent and high-quality recycled material for remanufacturing into new goods that are supplied to the marketplace.

Through our work we focus on building a world class circular economy system that minimises the impact on non-renewable resources, maximises waste avoidance, and makes a strong contribution towards a more sustainable, environmentally friendly and climate resilient future for all Victorians.

About our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan 2023—2026 (the Plan) defines our purpose, objectives and vision for a world class circular economy system that helps build a more sustainable future for all Victorians. The Plan, together with our Charter of Engagement, Community Engagement Strategy, and Regulatory Strategy, sets out the pathway to reform Victoria’s waste, recycling and resource recovery services. This Plan describes our strategic focus and immediate priorities for the next three years.

In preparing this plan, four key considerations have shaped our approach and priorities:

- Our policy environment.
- Our new role as a leader, enabler and regulator.
- Our engagement approach.
- Aboriginal self-determination.

Our policy environment

Our actions contribute to a broader global shift towards more sustainable development based on the United Nations 17 Sustainable development goals and targets [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](#). The targets aim, amongst other things, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, and take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Goals 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 are directly related to the work of Recycling Victoria.

The Victorian Government has committed to a long-term target of net zero emissions by 2045 and an emissions reduction target of 75 to 80 per cent by 2035. Achieving these targets is a shared responsibility across all sectors of the economy – Commonwealth, state, and local governments, the goods and services industry, waste, recycling and resource recovery sector, and the community. By reducing our waste, we also reduce our greenhouse gas emissions footprint and build a circular, more sustainable and climate resilient economy.

Victoria is projected to add 4.7 million people from 2018 to 2056, reaching a population of 11.2 million. This represents annual average growth of 125,000 people, at a rate of 1.5 per cent per annum. Greater Melbourne is projected to grow by about 4 million people, increasing from 5 million in 2018 to 9 million in 2056. Over the same period Victoria’s regions are expected to grow by just over 700,000 from 1.5 million to 2.2 million. Without mitigation, this growth will place greater pressure on our environment including through higher levels of waste generation. Victoria also needs a reliable and robust market to avoid precious materials and embodied energy being lost to landfill.



Our role and establishment as a waste, recycling and resource recovery services regulator

Victoria's waste, recycling and resource recovery services suffered severe market disruptions in 2019. This showed how exposed Victoria's waste, recycling and resource recovery system was to changes in global recycling markets and the consequential impact on local recycling service delivery.

In February 2020, the Victorian Government released *Recycling Victoria: A new economy*, the Victorian Government's policy and action plan to reform our waste, recycling and resource recovery system and transition Victoria to a circular economy over the next decade. As part of this policy, Recycling Victoria was created to provide leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling and resource recovery services and to support the development of a circular economy with a range of regulatory and strategic planning functions and tools.

Our engagement approach

Current waste, recycling and resource recovery system reforms will affect every household in Victoria, as well as each council, Alpine Resorts Victoria and the broader waste, recycling and resource recovery services sector. More broadly we will need to see continued and stronger leadership and commitment by all business and industry for more circular use of resources. The input and collaboration of these sectors will be critical to the successful implementation of the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* (CE Act)

and policy. Recycling Victoria has prepared a Charter of Engagement and a more detailed community engagement strategy setting out how it intends to consult and engage with councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria, industry, metropolitan and regional communities, and traditional owners.

Aboriginal self-determination

Traditional Owners are recognised in Victoria as the First Peoples, through a range of legal and policy instruments that support self-determination and their continuing responsibilities to care for Country. The Victorian Government is working in partnership with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to advance a treaty or treaties that will provide a foundation for a new, positive relationship, and enable true self-determination for Victoria's First Peoples. Recycling Victoria will work with Victoria's Traditional Owners and ensure our work is founded on the principles of self-determination. In doing so, we will make sure that Traditional Owner cultural knowledge is part of how we deliver our functions.



Our functions

Under section 16 of the CE Act, the Head, Recycling Victoria must deliver various functions aimed at providing leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling and resource recovery services in Victoria, and to support the development of a circular economy, outlined below.

Support development of a circular economy

- Reduce waste, support recycling and promote circularity in the use and reuse of products.
- Maximise the continued use of products and waste material over their life cycle.
- Support transition to a net zero and resilient Victoria.

Leadership

- Identify, monitor and manage risks and harm associated with waste, recycling and resource recovery services.
- Provide strategic and infrastructure planning for waste, recycling and resource recovery services.
- Collect, use, disclose and publish information and data.

Stewardship

- Oversee and build capacity for municipal residual waste, recycling and resource recovery service delivery.
- Support best practice procurement management by councils, Alpine Resorts Victoria and service providers for waste, recycling and resource recovery services.
- Advise on best practices for waste, recycling and resource recovery services.

Oversight

- Build and implement regulatory capability and systems for the sector.
- Oversee the Container Deposit Scheme.
- Implement the Waste to Energy Scheme.
- Develop and implement service standards, including standards for household waste and recycling services.



Our purpose

Our purpose is to provide leadership and oversight of waste and resource recovery services to support the circular economy.

A circular economy will maximise the continued use of products and waste material over their life cycle.



Our vision and focus areas

Our long-term vision is for a world class circular economy system that helps build a sustainable future for all Victorians. This vision will be built on the foundations of sustainability, leadership, collaboration and accountability.

Recognising that our purpose is to support the development of a circular economy, to achieve our vision for a world class circular economy system will require partnership and collective effort from state and local governments, waste, recycling and resource recovery sector, industry, businesses and community.

The realisation of our vision relies on the following long-term focus areas:

Circular economy is contributing to the net zero transition

- The long-term supply of recycled materials aligns with increased demand from downstream markets.
- This leads to 80% of waste from all waste streams being diverted from landfill by 2030 (72% by 2025) and a 50% reduction in organic material going to landfill between 2020 and 2030 (25% reduction by 2025).

Accountable, reliable and consistent waste and resource recovery services

- Greater capacity to prevent and respond to market disruptions and opportunities leading to less risk and more stability in service delivery.
- Continuous improvement in the performance and quality of services.

Productive use of resources

- Resource recovery rates improve into the future to meet government targets.
- Higher quality material streams are produced from the waste and resource recovery system leading to new markets and business opportunities for recycled materials.

Confidence in a diverse and competitive waste market

- Victorian community, industry and governments actively involved in an effective waste market because it has certainty, and transparency and enables investment, innovation and jobs growth.
- Strategic, streamlined and consistent approach in the delivery of state-wide waste, recycling or resource recovery services.

Our strategic objectives 2023 – 2026

Our strategic objectives align to the Victorian Government's *Recycling Victoria: A new economy policy* and action plan to transition Victoria to a circular economy and reform our waste and resource recovery system over the next decade.

Contribute to a strong and robust circular economy


Recycling helps protect our precious natural environment by reducing the use of virgin materials and the amount of waste disposed to landfill. Cleaner, more homogeneous materials with higher commodity value and stronger end markets requires improving the quality of recycled materials we generate, developing new markets and strong product stewardship. Recycling Victoria will have an early focus on ensuring materials collected from households are high quality and can be used again to make new products to reduce the circularity gap.

Increase resilience of the Victorian waste and resource recovery system

Victoria's waste needs are growing and becoming more complex. Appropriate regulation and strategic interventions and planning will be needed to improve standardisation and consistency in the delivery of recycling services. This will create pathways to a safe, resilient and efficient waste and resource recovery system, a key part of transitioning to a circular economy.

Enable sector investment and growth

The recycling sector is an important part of Victoria's economy, adding value and creating jobs as part of a growing circular economy. Recycling Victoria will work with all levels of government, industry, the community and research sectors to drive future waste management and resource recovery. This includes encouraging infrastructure investment to support increased recycling capacity, respond to new bans on waste export and safely manage hazardous waste. Access to strong and diverse end markets is a key component of a resilient and sustainable waste and resource recovery system.




Recovery
Strong and robust circular economy



Reliability
Resilient waste and resource recovery system



Economy
Sector investment and growth



Management
System capacity and capability

Build system capacity and capability

Victoria is developing a waste and resource recovery system that minimises waste generation and maximises resource recovery. Everyone has a part to play — collaboration between industry, community, and local, state and national governments is needed to help the sector respond to current and future challenges. Recycling Victoria will support the recycling sector to transition to a more resilient model, which delivers reliable waste, recycling and resource recovery services and benefits that Victorians expect.

Strategic priorities 2023 – 2026

Recycling Victoria commenced in July 2022 as a waste, recycling and resource recovery services regulator. Its strategic priorities over the course of this inaugural plan reflect the immediate requirement to progress the following key priorities.



Container Deposit Scheme

- Oversee Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), Scheme Coordinator and Network Operator agreements from mobilisation and ongoing operations.
- Actively regulate the system.
- Deliver key system components, such as to determine first suppliers and eligible containers; and build and maintain a supplier and container registration system.
- Develop and issue required guidelines and protocols.



Market risk and contingency plans

- Identify, monitor and mitigate serious system risks associated with waste, recycling and resource recovery services.
- Prepare Circular Economy Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan (CERCC Plan) and framework for Responsible Entity Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plans (RERCC Plans) for sector participants.



Market intelligence

- Provide regular, timely, and quality market data and insights to identify the key investment, gaps, issues, and opportunities.
- Provide strategic market information for greater market transparency and confidence for future investment, with a view to enabling stronger circular economy opportunities and interventions.



Engagement and consultative committees

- We will engage local government and Alpine Resorts, industry, and place-based stakeholders, and we will use consultative committees to advise the Minister and Head, Recycling Victoria of priorities and issues.



Infrastructure planning

- Identify longer term (30 year) infrastructure needs and projections to provide a more certain investment environment for sector resilience and growth.



Service standards

- Development, implementation and monitoring compliance with service standards for household waste, recycling and resource recovery services.



Waste to Energy Scheme

- Invite, assess, and determine licence applications from existing thermal waste to energy operators.
- Administer the expression of interest and full application processes for thermal waste to energy licences under the cap.



Strategic procurement

- Support local government towards best practice strategic procurement, which will support delivery of reliable and consistent waste, recycling and resource recovery service experiences and best value for money for the Victorian community.



Approach

Recognising our operating context, we've articulated our approach for the next three years to set us on the path to the objectives we want to see met.

We will:

- work to understand and respond to current and emerging issues through market intelligence
- assess and manage the greatest risk of market disruption and failure and drive continuous improvement
- be practical and solution focused to ensure we have the right approach for each circumstance
- work with councils, Alpine Resorts Victoria, industry and businesses to ensure they provide reliable and effective waste and resource recovery services for Victorians
- build effective partnerships that amplify our oversight, knowledge, reach and presence
- respect the knowledge and cultural values of Traditional Owners.

Drivers for success

To meet our purpose and deliver for Victorians over the next three years, we will be driven by:



Leadership and strategy

- Be clear about our role in the circular economy and our relationship with our strategic partners.
- Be accountable for our actions, engagement, and behaviour.
- Adopt principles and practices for modern, outcome focussed regulation.
- Lead for all Victorians recognising the unique needs of regional Victoria.



Collaborative partnerships

- Leverage existing relationships with councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria.
- Join other regulators and circular economy leaders in a strategic and coordinated approach to market oversight and development.



People and culture

- Build high performing and collaborative teams.
- Create a positive, safe and enjoyable place to work.
- Listen and learn and be committed to continuous improvement.



Information and knowledge

- Collect data and use intelligence to best inform our decisions and actions.



Business innovation and investment

- Provide planning and market strategies that build certainty and confidence to invest and innovate in our waste, recycling and resource recovery system across the state.



Communications and engagement

- Be clear about our role in the circular economy and our relationship with our strategic partners.
- Engage early, often, and respectfully with those impacted by our decisions, seeking to understand their aspirations and concerns, and their ideas and approaches.
- Listen and be responsive to the needs of regional Victorians.



Building our capabilities and systems



Influencing for positive circular economy outcomes

Recycling Victoria strives to deliver a more reliable waste and resource recovery system for Victoria. In doing so, our work supports Victoria's transition to a circular economy. We will identify opportunities to build and influence the broader network of government, industry, business and community working on the circular economy.



Regulatory approach and system

We will be building our capability to deliver the Regulatory Strategy over these three years, as we develop and implement the functions and actions in our priority areas.



Data and intelligence driven

Our decisions and actions will be informed by market data and intelligence. We are building a high-quality waste data management system for our investment in market research, risk management and strategic planning.



Developing our people

Recycling Victoria has a whole of waste, recycling and resource recovery system strategic oversight purpose and this requires aligning staff capability with the new functions of Recycling Victoria.

Our staff are committed to being service oriented, having a learning mindset, and being responsive and adaptive.



Charter of Engagement and Community Engagement Strategy

Our Charter of Engagement and Community Engagement Strategy set out our commitment to work with regional and metropolitan stakeholders and communities, businesses, industry, Traditional Owners, local councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria in decisions that affect them and on issues that matters to them.

Regulatory Strategy

Our Regulatory Strategy outlines how we will achieve our objectives and priorities, in line with our regulatory principles and approach. It outlines how we support, promote and monitor compliance with, and enforce, requirements under the CE Act.

Risk management

Recycling Victoria has responsibility to identify, monitor, manage and mitigate risks and harm associated with waste, recycling and or resource recovery services. Over the course of this plan, we will:

- expand data and intelligence to help detect market risks
- implement risk-based methodology for decisions on risk controls
- build capacity to respond to high risk or unforeseen issues that may arise
- ensure responsible entities acquit their responsibility for risk management under a Responsibility Entity Risk Contingency and Consequence framework
- provide support with meeting compliance requirements and enforce compliance where required.

Annual corporate planning and reporting

This Strategic Plan is a statutory requirement under the CE Act. The plan provides Recycling Victoria's objectives over the next three years and incorporates an aligned Regulatory Strategy and Community Engagement Strategy. It will be further developed and expanded annually as Recycling Victoria and the waste and resource recovery markets evolve.

The Strategic Plan is implemented via an annual business plan which provides the actions and strategies to achieve the objectives. Each financial year, we will report on our performance in our Annual Report, which is tabled in the Victorian Parliament and published on our website.



